

BARBOUR COUNTY

Honorable Charles Hart

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PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Drug and Alcohol prevention programs
2. Teen Pregnancy
3. There is a need for parents to be more aware of their responsibilities for their children.

Issues

Issues are the primary concerns or problems facing children in the county.

Health - Children's (0 - 19) physical and mental well-being in the county.

HIV infection and other sexually transmitted diseases

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Provide educational workshops and programs geared towards prevention
- Make referrals to the county health department, Montgomery Aids Outreach, and other outreach agencies for assistance
- Support abstinence programs

Childhood Obesity

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Nutrition education such as the W.I.C. program and the Extension NEP program along with teaching healthy meal choices at schools
- General education regarding the potential health risk related to obesity.
- Stress the need for physical education to be a requirement within the schools.

Substance Abuse

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Utilize the recently approved UPS grant
- Stress the need for continued education as to the risk and dangers regarding substance abuse
- Provide alternative recreational activities to foster positive self-esteem to prevent substance abuse.

Safety - Children live free of abuse, neglect, crime, and drugs.

Lack of availability of prevention programs for ages six to eighteen to include substance abuse programs

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Support community collaboration for programs
- Identify effective age appropriate programs
- Continued planning for "Operation Save Teens" presentation as well as other drug and gang awareness presentations. Youth leadership skills presentations (Be a positive leader rather than a follower)

Need for youth to spend free time in a positive, constructive manner

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Support current programs such as: Boys & Girls Club of Eufaula, Eufaula Community Center, and the Barbour County Resource Center in Clayton
 - Seek mentoring programs
 - Facilitate more avenues for recreation/sports and educational programs in the county.
- Seek transportation assistance for those children outside the City of Eufaula in order for them to have access to recreation/sports and educational programs.

Lack of programs to address stressors that lead to abuse, neglect, or abandonment of children

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Seek parenting classes
- Encourage schools to provide literature "tips for better parenting" classes through the school system.
- Continue yearly tribute to recognize April as Child Abuse Prevention Awareness Month as well as providing year round public awareness information on child abuse and neglect
- Promote the need for public assistance in supplementing daycare cost to low-income families who are working or in job training
- Provide yearly child abuse and neglect training for professional, law, enforcement, and school personnel

Education - Children

learn the skills necessary to become productive citizens.

Behavior Intervention

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Encourage school personnel to take a preventive measure when dealing with behavior problems
- Support programs that encourage students to make sensible choices in adverse situation
- Assist in establishing anger management programs as an alternative to attending in school suspension

Dropout Prevention

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Involve community agencies in mentoring and tutoring activities for at-risk youth
- Assist in establishing extended learning opportunities for middle school and high school

Literacy issues for Ages zero through nineteen

Policy Council Action Steps:

- The Council will recruit volunteers to assist the Barbour County Literacy Association
- The Council will ask agencies and other community resources to remind parents to read with their children and enforce good classroom behavior

Early Care and

Education - Children

(0 – 5) are provided opportunities to fully develop emotionally, socially, physically, and cognitively and are ready to succeed.

There is a need to establish a Pre-K readiness program for the Barbour County Board of Education

Policy Council Action Steps:

- The Council will approach the Barbour County Board of Education regarding Pre-K programs and grant information
- The Council will explore grants to help support the Barbour County Board of Education Pre-K program

Provide Education to childcare workers and families with children zero-five years

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Contact the Family Guidance Center of Dothan and have them provide training in Barbour County
- Coordinate with Department of Human Resources and Mental Health to educate families about services available for young children

Economic Security

- Children grow up in a financially stable home where the child's basic needs can be met.

The need to become financially independent

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Cooperate with parents, school systems, and other partners to encourage completion of high school
- Make referrals to job readiness/training programs and job fairs
- Partner with Eufaula/Barbour County Economic Development committees support and encourage job growth through new industry or expansion and growth of existing industries

Coordination of support systems that support families

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Create awareness of local support systems such as transportation; budgeting; dietary and nutrition needs (food stamps, WIC); health issues and education requirements.
- Act as liaison for above mentioned systems and eligible recipients.

Assurance of child support for eligible children

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Assist appropriate partners in seeking location of non-custodial parent
- Encouraging child support court to expedite reviews for delinquent child support payments
- Promote and distribute literature for responsible parenthood programs.

Parent Involvement and Skills -

Parents and guardians participation and effectiveness in fostering an environment for children to become mature, responsible and independent adults.

Need for continued increase of parental involvement

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Provide court-ordered parenting classes through the Eufaula City School System; especially in Child In Need Supervision cases
- The Eufaula City Schools will provide parent summit in which parents have an option of various classes to attend
- "Operation Save Teens" will be available to all families in Barbour County
- Parenting classes need to be provided to educate parents of children zero to five about what children need to know before kindergarten

Parents need to become more aware of the drug problem in Barbour County and recognize the signs of alcohol and drug abuse. Additionally, how to access programs for alcohol and drug treatment and rehabilitation. Also, how to prevent drug and alcohol use

Policy Council Action Steps:

- Through the UPS grant funds
- Coordinate with the District Attorney's office to provide drug education programs to schools, parents, and local community organizations

Make parents more accountable for their child's behavior, education, and basic needs

Policy Council Action Steps:

- To make parents a party in all juvenile court cases
- Have Churches and community organizations educate parents about their parental responsibilities
- School systems will send out information on becoming more involved in child's education

Policy Recommendation

1. Funding for long-term drug and alcohol treatment. (six months-one year)
2. Transportation for poor rural counties
3. Parenting education/skills development
4. Teen pregnancy prevention
5. Additional training for Juvenile Court employees
6. Additional training for Department of Human Resources employees, law enforcement, and teachers concerning child abuse and neglect
7. Provide more funding for recreation/sports in rural areas

Accomplishments

1. Received a Unified Prevention System Capacity Building grant to build a comprehensive substance abuse prevention system.
2. Brought Operation Save Teens to almost all schools in Barbour County and the community.